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FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2548

INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 000245

SIPDIS

FOR EAP/MTS AND G/TIP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREF](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [PHUM](#) [KTIP](#) [BM](#) [BX](#) [ID](#) [MY](#)

SUBJECT: MALAYSIAN POLICE INVESTIGATES BURMESE REFUGEE TIP ALLEGATIONS

REF: A. KUALA LUMPUR 102 - MALAYSIA 2009 TIP REPORT

[1B.](#) 08 KL 1017 - INTERIM TIP ASSESSMENT

[1C.](#) 08 KL 495 - BURMESE ALLEGE TRAFFICKING AT BORDER

Classified By: Political Counselor Mark D. Clark for reasons 1.4 (b and d).

[¶1.](#) (U) Inspector General of Police (IGP) Musa Hassan announced a joint investigation by Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) and Malaysia's Immigration Department into allegations that Immigration officials are involved in the trafficking of Burmese refugees along the Malaysia-Thai border. The April 1 announcement indicated the TIP task force, established by the RMP in late 2008, is leading the investigation with cooperation from the Immigration Department. Musa Hassan said, "The Malaysian Government is serious in combating human trafficking. Legal action will be taken against those involved, and we are also working closely with our Thai counterparts in the investigation." He also told reporters, "We do not condone this (alleged trafficking) and if anyone is found to be involved, then he will have to face the consequences." Musa added that he hosted a January 2009 tripartite meeting, in the East Malaysia state of Sarawak, of police chiefs from Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia to discuss transnational crimes, with a special emphasis on TIP.

[¶2.](#) (C) Poloff spoke with Mohamad Nizan, Principal Assistant Secretary in the Foreign Ministry's Multilateral Political Division, about the investigation. Mohamad Nizan said the GOM was very concerned about the allegations and that the RMP were looking into the matter. Poloff reminded Mohamad Nizan that the international community was closely watching the Malaysian government's response to the allegations and expected Malaysia to take responsible action on the findings. Mohamad Nizan assured us the GOM would act appropriately. PolAsst spoke with Deputy Superintendent of Police Aida, Officer-in-Charge of the TIP TF, about the announced investigation. Aida confirmed the investigation, saying it was a "first step." She hinted the RMP had identified several immigration officials as linked to the trafficking syndicate located along the Malaysian-Thai border.

[¶3.](#) (C) Comment: While the seriousness of Malaysia's law enforcement actions will be most important to gauge, the national police chief's announcement of the Malaysian government's investigation is a significant improvement over earlier statements by Foreign Minister Rais Yatim and Home Minister Syed Hamid that were defensive and questioned the basis of the allegations. This breakthrough in the Malaysian government's public acknowledgment of the seriousness of the trafficking allegations, and public confirmation of an investigation, could reflect a new approach under the leadership of incoming Prime Minister Najib (as well as the waning stars of Rais Yatim and Syed Hamid who both failed to win positions in the recent ruling party elections; their continuation in the Cabinet is unclear). Post will monitor

the investigation's progress and continue to urge that the
GOM take full legal measures against any implicated officials.
KEITH